

Preparing Grain Bins for Harvest Stats and Facts

FACTS

1. Proper bin and equipment preparation is key to preserving stored grain quality.
2. Small amounts of moldy or insect-infested grain left in equipment can contaminate a bin of new grain.
3. Rodents and pest problems are big issues with left over grain residue in bins and equipment / machinery.
4. Making sure that the bins are ready to be loaded with newly harvested grain reduces the chances of spoilage.
5. Grain bins are one of the biggest safety hazards for farmers who work in and around them. Serious and life-threatening dangers lurk throughout grain facilities, so it is imperative that farmers and workers are aware of these threats in order to protect themselves from serious injury and fatalities. Farm workers die by suffocation every year.

STATS

- The United States averaged about 35 reported grain-handling incidents per year from 2005 to 2015, about 60% to 70% of which were fatal, according to Purdue University. The actual number of entrapments is likely a third higher because many non-fatal incidents are never reported.
- In recent years, grain entrapments and fatalities have risen. In 2017, 23 grain entrapments and 12 deaths were recorded; in 2018, 30 grain entrapments and 15 deaths were recorded; and in 2019, 38 grain entrapments led to 23 deaths. Total grain entrapments rose by 65% over that 3-year period.
- Early data collection for 2020 shows that the year is off to a dangerous start, particularly in regard to grain bin entrapments.

- 30 documented grain entrapments resulted in 15 deaths (50% fatality rate) in 2018, a 30% increase from 2017 when 23 were recorded.
- In 2018, the state with the most documented grain entrapments, was Iowa with five cases total, followed by Kansas and Wisconsin, each with three.
- The majority of grain entrapment cases – 83% – occurred in the Midwest.
- Grain entrapments accounted for 49% of the documented cases of entrapments in confined spaces.